



<p>POLICY:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Student Attendance (High School)</p>		<p>POLICY NUMBER:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AC-1-7</p>
		<p>PREVIOUS/REPLACES:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New</p>
<p>APPROVED BY:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Executive Council</p>	<p>EFFECTIVE DATE AS OF:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">August 17, 2023</p>	<p>PRIOR VERSIONS:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">New</p>

1. Policy Statement:

The Government of Manitoba released *Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive and Action Plan to Enhance Student Presence and Engagement* (hereafter abbreviated as *Student Presence and Engagement*) in early 2023. This policy directive requires school divisions to adopt attendance policies that are consistent with the Province’s guidelines. As a school division, the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (to be referred to as MITT) acknowledges this responsibility and provides a high school attendance policy that is based on a student-centered approach that incorporates both proactive and preventative attendance practices.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all secondary students at MITT.

This policy does not apply to:

- Mature Students studying in a program leading to a Mature Student High School Diploma (e.g., Adult Learning Centres). Mature students are covered by [AC-1-6 Student Attendance – Post Secondary](#) policy and are encouraged to review it along with their program-specific policy.

3. Definitions:

Student Presence and Engagement requires school divisions to adopt common terminology for attendance-related terms. Wherever possible, MITT uses terminology defined in the policy directive. Asterisks (*) denote terms found in *Student Presence and Engagement*.

Absence*: Any time that a student is not in class or not participating in a school activity, while not being on suspension/expulsion.

Excused Absence*: Refers to any time that a student is not in class or not participating in school activity while not being on suspension/expulsion, with a valid excuse and the mutual consent of a parent and the school principal.



Unexcused Absence*: Refers to any time a student is not in class or not participating in school activity while not being on suspension/expulsion, without a valid excuse, with or without parental approval.

Engagement*: Students' attitudes towards schooling, their attendance and participation in school activities, disposition towards learning, and working and socializing with others in school. Engagement is expressed in students' feelings that they belong at school, and in their participation in school activities.

Chronic Absenteeism*: Being absent for 10 or more classes in a single high school course.

Regular Attendance*: Coming to school and/or participating in learning consistently and on a routine, habitual basis, missing no more than a cumulative five full days of classes for the entire school year.

Severe Chronic Absenteeism*: Being absent for 20 or more classes in a single high school course.

Student-Specific Plan (SSP)*: A planning, record-keeping, and communication document. Student-specific planning is a process through which members of student support teams meet the unique needs of individual students; it may range from short-term strategies applied in the classroom to comprehensive, individualized programming.

Presence*: When a student attends and participates in the school or classroom on the days in which they are required. Students may be present even if they are not physically within a classroom, depending on their student-specific plan.

4. Policy

4.1. MITT promotes student presence and engagement by:

- a. Creating learning environments that are safe, welcoming, and culturally responsive to students.
- b. Promoting positive and respectful relationships with students and parents/guardians.

4.2. MITT proactively addresses absenteeism by:

- a. Providing timely outreach to parents/guardians when a student's absence is unexcused, and personal outreach whenever a pattern of absenteeism develops.
- b. Collaborating with parents/guardians and students to identify and respond to barriers that negatively affect student presence and engagement.



- 4.3. MITT uses a consistent approach across classes to document, monitor, analyze, and report student presence and absenteeism.
 - a. Attendance data is communicated with sending school guidance counselors on a weekly basis.
- 4.4. MITT's attendance policy and procedures are available on the MITT website and communicated to parents/guardians as appropriate.
- 4.5. MITT provides a non-punitive, fair, and predicable response to student absenteeism.
 - a. Suspensions, expulsions, and withdrawals are not used to respond to student absenteeism.
 - b. MITT develops a Student-Specific Plan (SSP) for any student who has chronic absenteeism. The SSP identifies student-specific barriers affecting attendance and creates strategies to respond to these barriers.
- 4.6. If MITT is unsuccessful in addressing Severe Chronic Absenteeism for a student, the principal notifies the department's School and Community Support Unit in writing, as well as notify Child and Family Services (CFS) if there are concerns about student safety and well-being.

5. Absenteeism Response Procedures for MITT High School Students

- 5.1. When a teacher determines that a student has a pattern of absenteeism that is likely to lead to Chronic Absenteeism, personal contact from the teacher, or designate, is made to the student's parents/guardians to better understand the nature of the absences and to proactively identify strategies in response to any barriers.
- 5.2. When a student reaches Chronic Absenteeism:
 - a. The MITT Principal assigns a case manager to coordinate the Chronic Absenteeism response process.
 - b. A meeting involving the student, parents/guardians, the instructor, and principal is scheduled.
 - c. A SSP is created for the student following the meeting.
- 5.3. When a student reaches Severe Chronic Absenteeism, an in-school intervention is required along with other members of the school support team and external agencies, if applicable.



6. Absenteeism Response Procedures for Secondary Students in a High School Partnership Program

- 6.1. When a teacher determines that a student has a pattern of absenteeism that is likely to lead to Chronic Absenteeism, personal contact from the teacher, or designate, is made to the student's parents/guardians to better understand the nature of the absences and to proactively identify strategies in response to any barriers.
- 6.2. When a student reaches Severe Chronic Absenteeism, a Program Manager, or designate, contacts the sending school's guidance counselor.
- 6.3. The sending school's guidance counselor responds to the student's absenteeism in accordance to the sending division's attendance policy.
 - a. MITT staff collaborate with the sending school to develop and implement a SSP.

7. Roles and Responsibilities:

Student Presence and Engagement requires school divisions to clearly articulate roles and responsibilities for students, parents, teachers, principals/designates, and school divisions. Asterisks (*) denote responsibilities stated in, and required by, the policy directive.

7.1. Students:

- a. Are responsible to attend school and classes regularly and punctually*
- b. Comply with the school's code of conduct, and complete assignments and other related work required by teachers*
- c. Participate in student-specific planning*
- d. Participate in the development and implementation of a Student-Specific Plan
- e. Advise their teacher(s), as soon as reasonably possible, before any planned absence (e.g., medical appointment).

7.2. Parents:

- a. Have the right to be informed regularly of the attendance, behaviour, and academic achievement of their child in school, and to participate in planning*
- b. Are responsible for cooperating with the child's teachers and other employees of the school division to ensure the child complies with the school's code of conduct*
- c. Take reasonable measures to ensure their child attends school regularly*
- d. Support their student's regular attendance and work with MITT staff on attendance-related matters.
- e. Advise their child's teacher(s), as soon as reasonably possible, before any planned or unplanned absence.



- f. Whenever possible, schedule appointments or family vacations on the days when MITT is closed.
- g. Contact their teacher at least two weeks in advance of any planned, extended period of absence
- h. Monitor the student's attendance and when a concern arises, work with the teacher, Student Advisor, sending school guidance counselor (if applicable), and the student, to develop an improvement plan.
- i. Support the implementation of their child's Student-Specific Plan, if necessary.

7.3. Teachers:

- a. Are responsible for monitoring and recording student attendance*
- b. Are responsible for timely communication to the principal and the parent*
- c. Identify potential issues related to chronic lateness and/or absenteeism*
- d. Promote and support regular attendance*
- e. Communicate (verbally and in writing, if needed) with students and parents when concerns related to attendance arise*
- f. Document steps taken to communicate with students, parents, and outside agencies when concerns related to attendance arise*
- g. Participate in the student-specific planning process*
- h. Record student attendance on a daily basis
- i. Monitor students' attendance patterns, and when a concern arises, communicate with the student and/or parents/guardians to create an improvement plan.
- j. When a student experiences Chronic Absenteeism, contact Student Services to initiate a meeting to develop a plan that supports regular attendance.
- k. Notify their Academic Coordinator, or designate, when a referral has been made to Student Services.

7.4. Principals/designates:

- a. Are responsible to work with teachers, students, parents, and others, as needed, to promote regular attendance, including identifying supports in response to student absences*
- b. Ensure teachers maintain accurate attendance records*
- c. Report chronic/severe absenteeism to the school division*
- d. Invite community agencies, organizations and associations, other education authorities, and regional health and children's services authorities to plan collaboratively in support of appropriate educational programming and planning for students*



- e. Monitor and review student attendance data and oversee the student-specific planning process, including the assignment of a case manager for students experiencing Chronic Absenteeism*
- f. Lead school-based attendance initiatives*
- g. Report absences to parents/guardians
- h. Verify that student absences are accurately reported to parents/guardians and sending schools (if applicable), in a timely manner.

8. Administration:

The Vice-President, Academic is responsible for the implementation of this policy

9. Review:

This policy is reviewed by Academic Council every five years.

10. Reference:

MITT Policies:

- Student Attendance - Post-Secondary (AC-1-6)

Government Documents:

- Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning (2023). Safe and Caring Schools: A Policy Directive and Action Plan to Enhance Student Presence and Engagement.

https://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/presence_engagement/index.html